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ABSTRACT

In order to better serve minority students and other underrepresented groups, Fresno City College, in California, implemented two innovative programs: the Re-Entry Student Conference (RESC) and the Registration-To-Go (RTG) program. The RESC was a 2-day enrollment program designed to attract students from the Fresno area over the age of 25. Many of the program participants were completing or had recently earned their high school diploma or its equivalent after being out of the educational system for many years, while others were interested in job training on the vocational or transfer track. Of the 73 students who attended, 50 (69%) were ethnic minorities. The conference featured an introduction to college personnel, a motivational session, presentations on college services, an application workshop for new students, a lunchtime social mixer, assessment testing, and child care. The RESC program also provided follow-up counseling and advisement as the students began their first semester, and as needed afterward. The RTG is an ongoing program intended to provide students completing high school with an opportunity to register for college before their high school graduation date. RTG was designed to "demystify" college, make students aware of college requirements, and promote community colleges as a viable option to those who may not have considered attending college otherwise. The program includes orientation services and helps students complete the college application, take the college assessment test, and register for courses. Conducted at high school campuses in collaboration with high school personnel, RTG has grown from serving 149 students at 3 high schools in 1988-89 to 1,773 students at 12 schools in 1990-91. (MAB)

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MINORITY/UNDERREPRESENTED STUDENT ENROLLMENT ENHANCEMENT

(A presentation delivered to the 1991
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This presentation focused on programs utilized by Fresno City College to improve its efforts in attracting Minority Students. Fresno City College intends to meet the educational needs of students within its service area which is located in California's Central San Joaquin Valley. The service area of the college with its rural industrial base, is a cultural "salad bowl" with over 50 different language groups represented.

The need for community college education in this region is particularly important due to several factors such as: social economic depression status of many students; students from minority backgrounds functioning with a foreseen view of educational opportunities being limited. As well as, the general need for individuals to be better prepared educationally and technically for our ever-changing job employment system which is dependent on education. These facts imply that Fresno City College must continue to be innovative in its techniques to attract new students, especially, those from minority or disadvantaged populations.

Fresno City College is intending to meet these challenges with a variety of programs and services. Two programs in particular we will discuss in this presentation are:

1. **The Re-Entry Student Conference**
2. **The Registration-To-Go Program**

Re-Entry Student Conference

The Re-Entry Student Conference was an enrollment program designed to attract students over the age of twenty-five in the Fresno City College service area. Many of the Re-Entry students were individuals that were completing or had recently earned their High School diploma or its equivalency after being out of the educational system for many years. Some of the Re-Entry Conference participants were individuals interested in a new or different type of job training either on the Vocational or Transfer track. Of the seventy-three students that attended the conference, fifty students (69%) were from ethnic minority

backgrounds, also many of this group received financial aid assistance.

The concept of the Conference and its implementation received a high level of support from the Fresno City College administration. At the very inception of the planning of this conference, college administration was very committed to see Re-Entry students served with the utmost quality and care.

The Conference consisted of the following:

-Student introduction and familiarization

Re-Entry students were able to meet with college personnel from various programs and services and also were able to interact with each other.

-Educational Motivation session

Re-Entry students received motivational messages delivered by speakers with "Re-Entry" type backgrounds.

-Presentations on a wide variety of college services

-Application Workshop for interested new students

Most of the individuals attended the conference to serve as a vehicle for college enrollment. All questions regarding the application process were answered.

-A full-fledged lunch for conference participants

Students were again able to form alliances with other conference participants.

-Assessment testing for student advisement

The college assessment test was offered conveniently during the conference so that all interested students could take advantage of the service.

-Child care was provided upon request.

The conference was held on a Saturday to enable students with jobs, Adult School commitments, or other conflicts to be present. Students received individualized course advisement and were then allowed to register.

Many participants of the two-day conference, according to a

post-conference survey, left energized and excited about the possibility of pursuing their educational dreams. The FCC Re-Entry program also provided follow-up counseling and advisement as the students began their first semester of work and as needed.

Registration-To-Go (RTG)

The RTG program was designed to provide students completing high school an opportunity to register for college before their high school graduation date. This process allows students to focus in on their higher educational goals, and to receive assistance by the college during the registration process. Students receive comprehensive college advisement in a collaborative manner from both High School counselors and local community college advisors on their High School campus. In the advisement session the students are made aware of college deadlines and program information. They are then assisted by their schools to take part in various college enrollment services. The program has helped to "demystify" the intricacies associated with registration for many students. Students that would probably have not taken the initiative to apply to college are identified and assisted by this program. This fact occurs mainly for three reasons: many students that would not consider college due to time constraints or transportation problems are served in a convenient manner. Secondly, individuals in the college service area (especially in far proximity from the college) will not complete the steps to become enrolled by the college. Thirdly, many of these students genuinely feel that college is unattainable.

The RTG program administered by Fresno City College sought community participation as part of its planning to insure quality in-service/delivery. The college RTG program worked collaboratively with high school level staff to identify the logistics of the program. Counselors, at RTG high schools with high percentages of minority student enrollment, worked with such entities as community organizations, churches, and neighboring business. Also the local media was contacted to assist in the mission of promoting the program. The counselors working with

college staff also were able to gain support from high school campus administration and faculty. In many instances the faculty at the high school campus was so committed to the RTG program that they would take the initiative to make themselves accountable for their students receiving community college information and meeting deadlines. The high school campuses provided all necessary facilities during the academic year for Fresno City College to offer the services of Registration To Go.

The following components make up the RTG registration process:

a) complete college application (application process)
b) take college assessment test
c) attend the orientation services
d) tour the college campus (optional)
e) register for courses

All of the services of this program besides, obviously, the college campus tour, are provided on the high school campus. Since its inception the number of RTG enrollees has increased from 149 students in three high schools to 1,773 students in twelve high schools. Additionally, among minority students, the increase has gone from 89 students during the 1988-89 academic year to 1,121 during 1990-91.

Attributes of the Registration To Go Program

- The program makes students aware of vital college requirements and deadlines
- The program clarifies the registration process for first-time college students
- The program has increased the numbers of students that enroll in college courses at each participating high school all of its years of existence.
- Inherently, minority students also consider college as a viable option for their future through the efforts of this program.
- The program has also assisted the college in gaining bilateral support on the college campus and among feeder high school personnel for various student support

programs and other avenues students use to matriculate into college

- Most importantly, the RTG program enables the college not to lose those high school students that would have bettered themselves through the benefit of higher education.